Dear Superintendents and BOCES Directors:

As many of you saw, the Governor issued a State Of Emergency today (see below). This allows our state government to get access to additional federal and state resources and allows our Governor to waive certain laws. An analysis by the Governor's Office does suggest that *if necessary* he has the capacity to close schools and other public places if the health department deems it necessary for reasons that "threaten the public health." Of course, you also have the authority to do so at any time regardless of any state decision.

In addition, the first bullet in the press release below directs the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment to engage in emergency rulemaking to ensure workers in food handling, hospitality, child care, health care, and **education** can get paid sick leave to miss work if they exhibit flu-like symptoms and have to miss work awaiting testing results for COVID-19. If you have employees for whom you do not already provide paid sick leave, this action may impact you. We will connect with CDLE and provide you with more details as they become available.

CDE is working with CDPHE, the Emergency Operations Center and the Governor's Office to develop specific guidance regarding school closure, travel, events and protecting at-risk populations. That information will be available to you within the next day or so.

As I mentioned in my email last night, you can get the latest updates from Gov. Jared Polis' news releases, or from CDPHE's Daily Fast Facts.

I know you are all working directly with your local public health agencies for planning and potential closures. Again, to help us ensure that we are providing an accurate picture of any school closures to the state Emergency Operations Center, we've created this form to gather any potential school closures. If you could add this into your process for communicating about a potential school closure, we would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you,

Katy Anthes
Commissioner
Colorado Department of Education